

*Rebuilding the Foundations: A Special
Report on State and Local Public Works
Financing and Management*

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**REBUILDING
THE FOUNDATIONS**



A Special Report on State and Local
Public Works Financing and Management



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

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Foreword

Potholes and sewer problems are perpetual items on local government agendas—they never go away and there is never enough money to fix all of them, or to reconstruct bridges and roads that may be in danger of collapse. In 1988, prompted by the many national studies calling for more investment in public works infrastructure, the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation asked the Office of Technology Assessment to evaluate how technologies, management, and financing could improve public works and make them more efficient and productive.

From the outset, OTA planned to review State and local public works management and finance to spotlight issues that needed attention. The review produced so much practical and useful information that a decision was made to publish the results early in 1990 for use by the 101st Congress in this special report, *Rebuilding the Foundations: State and Local Public Works Financing and Management*. OTA's final report for this assessment, *Rebuilding the Foundations: Public Works Technologies, Management, and Financing*, will be completed in the summer of 1990.

Several intertwined issues quickly came to dominate OTA's discussions with State and local public works officials. As this report documents, the concerns centered on how to raise more money for upgrading and maintaining public works, how to enhance public works, and how to preserve the community environment and quality of life. Local officials focused on the complex tasks of resolving conflicts among these issues in a controversy-ridden and politically charged arena. State representatives highlighted the steps they have already taken to increase support for localities. This special report also outlines the roles of Federal, State, and local governments and points to avenues for strengthening the intergovernmental structure for managing and financing public works.

Throughout the study, the advisory panel, workshop participants, and a host of government, industry, and private citizen reviewers contributed a broad and invaluable range of perspectives. OTA thanks them for their substantial commitment of time and energy. Their participation does not necessarily represent endorsement of the contents of the report, for which OTA bears sole responsibility.



JOHN H. GIBBONS
Director

Rebuilding the Foundations Advisory Panel

Card Bellamy, *Panel Chair*
Principal, Morgan Stanley & Co., Inc.

Jon Craig
Chief, Water Quality Service
Oklahoma State Department of Health

Dave Davis
Executive Director
Massport

Siro DeGasperis
Vice President, Public Affairs
United Parcel Service

Daniel Dudek
Senior Economist
Environmental Defense Fund

Hazel Gluck
President
Public Policy Advisors

Anthony Hall, Jr.¹
Law Office of Peter Williamson

Austin V. Koenen²
Managing Director, Public Finance
Morgan Stanley & Co., Inc.

Jerome Kruger
Department of Materials Science
and Engineering
The Johns Hopkins University

Fred Moavenzadeh
Director, Center for Construction
Research and Education
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

James Poirot
Chairman
CH2M Hill

Harry Reed
Planning Director
Arizona Department of Transportation

Burton Stallwood
Town Administrator
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Michael Uremovich
Vice President of Marketing
American President Companies

Theodore G. Weigle, Jr.
Executive Director
Chicago Regional Transportation Authority

¹Formerly Member, Houston City Council.

²Formerly Managing Director, Shearson, Lehman, Hutton, Inc.

NOTE: OTA appreciates and is grateful for the valuable assistance and thoughtful critiques provided by the advisory panel members. The panel does not, however, necessarily approve, disapprove, or endorse this report. OTA assumes full responsibility for the report and the accuracy of its contents.

OTA Project Staff-Rebuilding the Foundations

John Andelin, *Assistant Director, OTA
Science, Information, and Natural Resources Division*

Nancy Carson, *Program Manager
Science, Education, and Transportation*

Edith B. Page, *Project Director*

Julia Connally, *Principal Analyst*

Karen Mathiasen, *Research Assistant*

Sharon Burke, *Research Assistant*

Miriam Roskin, *Summer Research Assistant*

Marsha Fenn, *Assistant to the Program Manager*

Madeline Gross, *Administrative Secretary*

Kimberley Gilchrist, *Secretary*

Gay Jackson, *Administrative Secretary*

Contractors

Analytic Services
Sophie M. Korczyk
Apogee Research, Inc.
Sarah Campbell

Government Finance Research Center
Thomas D. Hopkins
Rochester Institute of Technology
Porter Wheeler

State and Local Infrastructure Management and Financing Workshop, July 7,1989

John Amberger
Executive Director
southeast Michigan Council of
Governments

Mary Boergers
Delegate
Maryland House of Delegates

Wayne Collins
County Engineer
Maricopa County Highway
Department, Arizona

Settle Dockery
Development Director
York Properties

John Gunyou
City Finance Officer
city of Minneapolis, MN

Jonathan Atkin
Office of Technology Assessment

Michael Bell
The Johns Hopkins University

Robert K. Best
California Department of
Transportation

Ray Beurket
American public Works Association

Peter Blair
Office of Technology Assessment

Rebecca Brady
National Conference of State
Legislatures

George Branyan
Office of Technology Assessment

Harry Cooke
National Waterways Conference, Inc.

Claudia Copeland

Jerry F. Lavelle
Tri-City Regional Port District

Howard Levenson
Office of Technology Assessment

Steven Lockwood
Federal Highway Administration

Richard Marchi
Massport

Kay Martin
Association of American Railroads

Kenneth Mead
General Accounting Office

Mark Meo
University of Oklahoma

Wade Miller
Consultant

Elizabeth Miner
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Jeffrey Mom
Urban Mass Transportation
Administration

Don Niehus
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Obie O'Bannion
Association of American Railroads

Walter Parham
Office of Technology Assessment

Henry Peskin
Edgedale Associates

Craig Philip
Southern Pacific Transportation Co.

Michael Phillips
Office of Technology Assessment

Beth Pinkston
Congressional Budget Office

Douglas Porter
Urban Land Institute

Richard Powell
American president Lines

Yvonne Pufahl
General Accounting office

Karen Rasmussen
California Trucking Association

John Reith
American Trucking Association

Victor Rezendes
General Accounting Office

Jenifer Robison
Office of Technology Assessment

David Sanford, Jr.
U.S. Army corps of Engineers

Neil D. Schuster
International Bridge, Tunnel, and
Turnpike Association

Sarah J. Siwek
Southcoast Air Quality Management
District

Ed smith
U.S. Army corps of Engineers

Richard Sullivan
American Public Works Association

Ted Thompson
New York State Department of
Transportation

Vern Wagar
National Association of County
Engineers

Thomas Wehri
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Hendrik Willems
U.S. Department of the Interior

Carl Williams
California Department of
Transportation

Jacqueline Williams
General Accounting Office

Larry Wilson
Arkansas Department of Pollution
Control and Ecology

Jenifer Wishart
Hickling Management Consultants

Leslie Wollack
National League of Cities

Andrew Wyckoff
Office of Technology Assessment